

# Mrs. George Gould Hasn't Forgotten How to Act; Crush at Plaza Reminds Her of Old Daly Days

Former Edith Kingdon Returns to Stage for One Matinee in the Star Role of "Mrs. Van Vechten's Divorce Dance," Supported by Kyrle Bellew.

APPLAUDED BY SOCIETY AND THE PROFESSION.

Great Crowd Listens to Play-let at Mrs. Martin's Musclete Tea, and They Were All "Somebodies," Too, in Costly Furs and Gowns.

Of course you went to "Mrs. Van Vechten's Divorce Dance" at the Plaza yesterday afternoon? No! What a pity, old girl! Beasty shame you didn't look in, old chap!

Yes, there was a mob. Everybody was there, and everybody was somebody except for a few newspaper persons, you know. There were the Goulds and the Astors and the Vanderbilts and as far along as you cared to go in the social register, not to mention a few foreign counts—anyhow they brushed their hair that way.

You never saw such a crush! The ballroom was fairly squeezed, and a lot of us chaps had to foot it through the performance just like the people standing in the back of the opera. One humorous fellow—doubtless a newspaper person—was heard to remark he had been in society so much this week that his feet were sore—vulgar, but funny, wasn't it?

There were any number of the old boys there, from the trust companies and other downtown causes of distrust. It was really remarkable to see the number of gray old jollyboys who had knocked off work early just to chug up to "Mrs. Van Vechten's Divorce Dance." But of course there's very little money for them to take in now, poor old chaps!

The women were all furs and feathers. Maxine Elliott's furs were as black as her hair, and the rest of her was black velvet. She wasn't the least bit theatrical, and she wasn't home very quietly at the end. Ethel Barrymore stopped to talk and her hat and things had a few words to say for themselves. Arnold Daly, who's going to be a drawing-room actor, was there too, rather taking it away from the society actresses.

Isn't it funny, by the way, that society people will go out of their way to see acting when it's all around them from morning till night—and then back to morning again?

Crush Delayed the Start. But we're a long time getting to "Mrs. Van Vechten's Dance," aren't we? It was quite like that yesterday afternoon. Mr. Frederick Townsend Martin, who lured us into the thing, gave it out that the play would begin at 4.30, but it was some time after that before the ushers could take a long breath. They were all from the front families, but only those who knew could tell them from the hotel people.

At last George Jay Gould, Jr., and Hamilton stepped out upon the stage in silk knickered powdered wigs and all that sort of thing, looking as silly as you please as pages, and then came out the girls in their evening gowns, and then came out the girls in their evening gowns, and then came out the girls in their evening gowns.

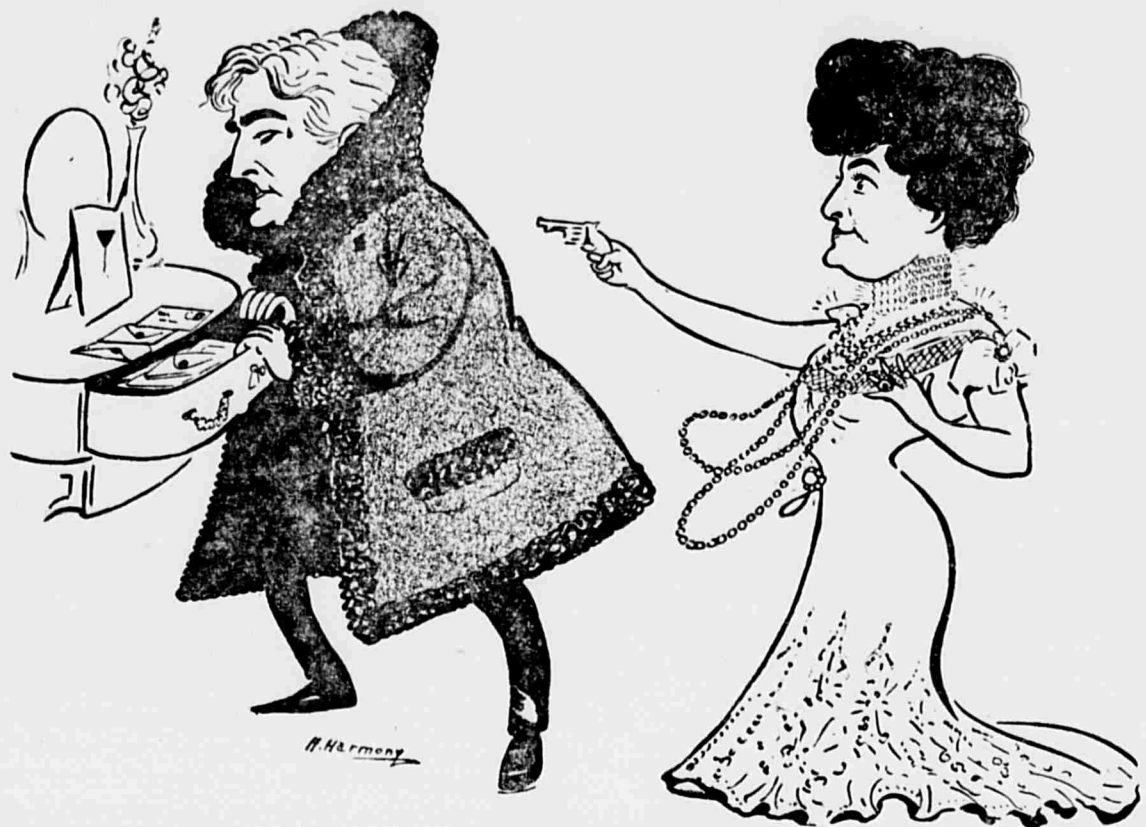
Marie turned up the lights, and chattered a bit in French and English just to give everybody an equal chance to understand her. Mrs. Bruyn was Marie. Then Mrs. Gould—Mrs. George, you know, who used to be Edith Kingdon down at Daly's—came on as Mrs. Van, looking as fit as the fiddle that was playing for her divorce dance off stage. She was plump and pleasant and she belonged to her gown. She sat at her dressing table, tossing a word or two at Marie, and reading a note or three. There was one from Freddie Martin—fancy that!—and you should have heard the audience laugh when his name popped out. Freddie wrote that he couldn't go to sleep without telling her of the delight she had given him by coming to his tea. Freddie talked off with a word about the nation that burned under his calm exterior and then came this: "P. S.—Don't drop this in the Plaza."

The Divorce Dance. Another note was from one of Mrs. Van's divorced friends in Sioux Falls. She wasn't at all enthusiastic about South Dakota, and she congratulated Mrs. Van upon having secured a home-made divorce. But she was enthusiastic about divorce. "They say," she wrote, "that the

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Liberty bell is cracked. It isn't. It is all there. Not bad—what? And here was Mrs. Van priming her last prim before celebrating her first year of freedom with a divorce dance. Rather a taking idea, don't you think? You see, her husband had been convicted of leading a gay life on the testimony of a private detective.

Mrs. Van told Marie she had just sent for a detective to watch the family jewels. When she went out to the tune of "The Merry Widow" waltz a man came in all muffled up, and Marie took him to be the detective. He picked up a pair of tiny pink slippers and remarked: "What a hit they would make in Chicago!"

Of course you knew he was the ex-husband, and Mrs. Van knew him too, once he turned around to save himself from being shot for a burglar. It was Kyrle Bellew, having more trouble with

shrugged away from him when he started to toy with her shoulder. However, they both began to edge toward the sentimental after a little. "You called me 'Ned,'" said Mr. Van, softly. "I didn't," declared Mrs. Van. "Then you thought I was 'The Witching Hour,'" remarked Mrs. Van, with society sarcasm. "Your divorce dance is a novelty," he remarked. "Oh, no," she answered, "it is a Chicago idea."

"What is that the orchestra is playing?" he asked. "It sounds familiar." "It is Chopin's Funeral March, arranged for a dance. You see," she explained, "my divorce dance is a cross between a burial and a coming-out party."

And All Ends Happily. He wanted to go downstairs with her, but she said it would look immoral and

at stage wife. At first Mrs. Van was as cold as a bottle, but when she noticed that Mr. Bellew's face was drawn to a special matinee size she remarked that he looked sad and worn. "I lost my wife a year ago," he said, sincerely. "I hope she didn't suffer in the end," remarked Mrs. Van, with society sarcasm. "Your divorce dance is a novelty," he remarked. "Oh, no," she answered, "it is a Chicago idea."

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